



# Phonics: The Building Blocks of Early Reading



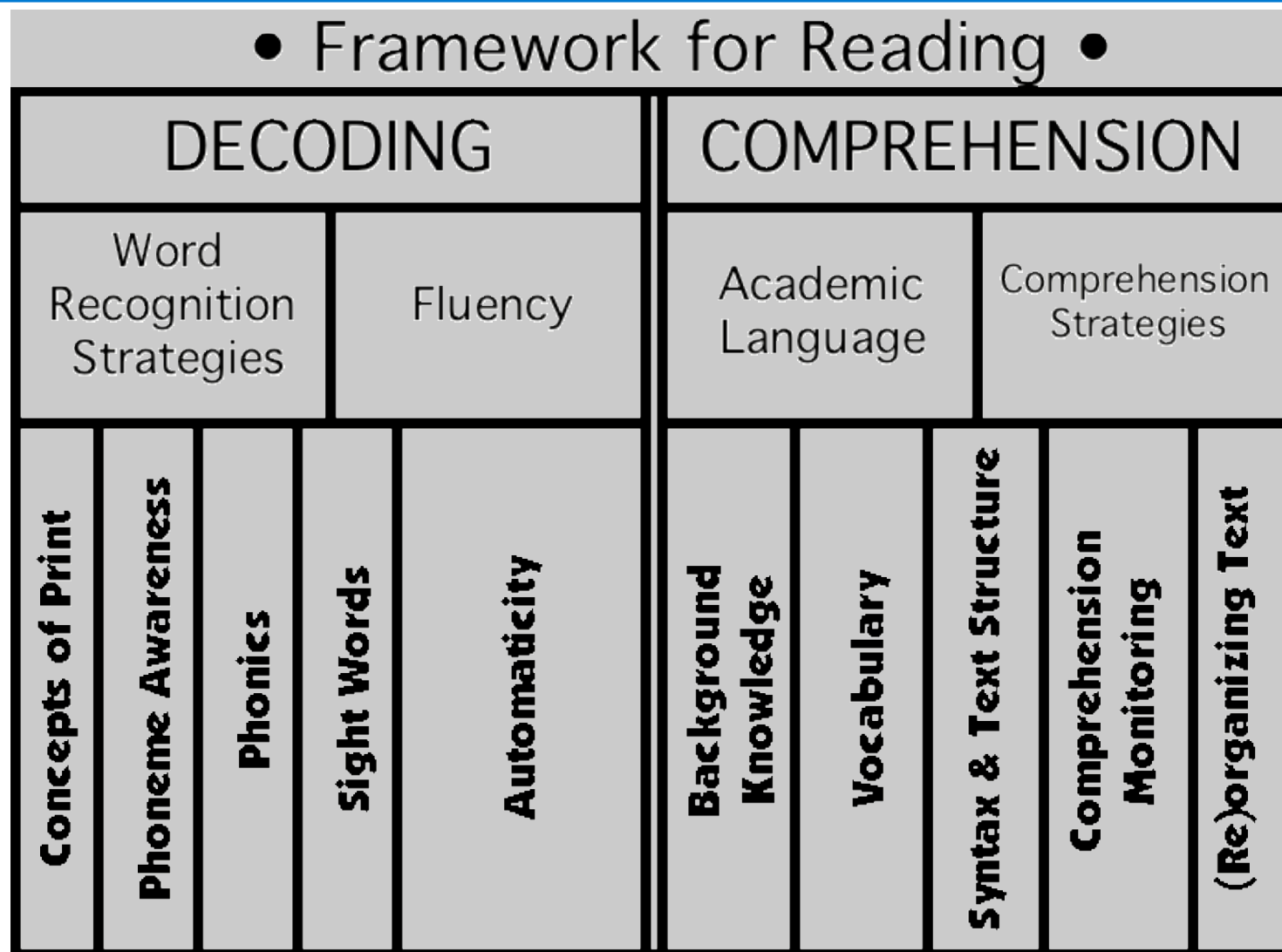
# Workshop Outcomes

- **Develop a deeper understanding of the concepts of the English spelling system.**
- **Become familiar with using explicit, systematic instruction.**
- **Understand the developmental progression in which orthographic knowledge is acquired.**
- **Become familiar with sound symbol correspondence, rules, and patterns in English spellings.**
- **Understand the instructional needs of English Learners and how features of the primary language can interfere with English pronunciation.**

# Today's Session

- **What is phonics?**
- **What is the best way to teach phonics?**
  - Explicit
  - Systematic
  - Sequence of instruction
- **The layering of the English spelling system**
- **Orthography and acquisition**
- **Instructional needs of English learners**

# Framework for Reading





# What is Phonics?

- It is the pairing of a sound with the letter or letters (graphemes) that represent that sound.
- This pairing is also called sound/symbol correspondence.



# Why Teach Phonics?

- **Phonics helps all learners.**
- **Good readers spell better with phonics instruction.**
- **Many children, even good readers, do BETTER with explicit, systematic phonics instruction.**
- **Phonetic knowledge is especially important for beginning readers, poor readers, or “at risk” students.**



# What Kind of Phonics

## ■ **Systematic, not random:**

- Preplanned skill sequence
- Progresses from easier sounds to more difficult sounds
- High-utility sounds and letters taught first
- Letters with similar shapes and sounds are separated
- Vowels separated in sequence of alphabetic instruction



# What Kind of Phonics?

## ■ Explicit:

- The teacher explains and models
- Gives guided practice
- Watches student responses and gives corrective feedback
- Plans extended practice on skills as needed by individuals



**Example of a Beginning Phonics Test - Shefelbine**
**BPST  
Beginning Phonics Skills Test**

J. Shefelbine 1992, '93, '96(a), '96(b)

(For K., 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders reading below a third grade level on a graded word list such as the San Diego.)

Name Kendalla Date 12-4-96 Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Consonant sounds and names:** Record sounds on top of each letter and names under each letter: do all sounds before doing letter names: consider skipping names if 10 or more sounds are correct: mark correct answers with ✓, incorrect answers with actual response, and no response with ?; also note which sounds are distorted, e.g., "fuh."

21 /21

✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	(continuous sounds)
m	s	f	l	r	n	h	v	w	z		
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	(stop sounds)
b	c	d	g	p	t	j	k	y	x	q	

2. **Consonant digraph sounds:** Follow directions for sounds in #1. (th can have two sounds: voiced (that) (v) and unvoiced (thin) (uv))

4 /4

✓	✓	✓	✓
sh	th	ch	wh

3. **Short vowel sounds:** "Tell me the sounds of these letters." If the students give a long vowel sound, prompt them by asking if they know another sound. Do not specifically ask for short vowel sounds. Mark on top with " for short. — for long. Record incorrect answers with actual response or ? if no response. You are really most interested in the short vowel sounds, so there is no need to prompt students if they do not give the long sounds.

5 /short

✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
i	o	a	u	e

4. **Blending words with short, final e and long and other vowel digraphs, and r controlled vowel patterns:** Record incorrect answers with actual response or ? if no response.

<u>9</u> /10 short	map	rip	met	rub	mop	lip	lot	zap	fell	nut
<u>5</u> /5 final e	fine	rope	rake	ri/coo	kite					
<u>3</u> /5 lvd	soap	leak	pain	feed	ray					
<u>2</u> /5 ovd	carve	moon	round	lawn	foot					
<u>1</u> /5 r-c	fur	sort	seer	dare	seven					
<u>1</u> / syl	silent	ladder	napkin	locate	cactus					

seven will be  
eight 2/96



# Elements of Phonics Lesson

- **Sound (Phonemic awareness)**
- **Letter-sound association (often uses a card)**
- **Word building (uses letter cards)**
- **Spelling (different types, based on word)**
- **Sentence dictation (may use cards)**
- **Reading decodable text**
- **Application in other context**

- **What methods does this teacher use to introduce the letter and sound?**
- **How does she ensure that every child gets multiple opportunities to practice the sound?**

# Direct Instruction of Sounds and Symbols



## ■ Teach — How to

- Link to prior knowledge
- Purpose and importance of the learning
- Teacher models the learning

## ■ Practice — Let's do

- Highly structured practice
- Guided practice

## ■ Apply — You do

- Use the new learning to decode words



# Note the Difference

## ■ Explicit Instruction

- After a lesson in which students isolate words that begin with the /k/ sound, the teacher links the sound to the letter by showing students the letter, telling them it stands for the /k/ sound, and using c to practice making words that begin with /k/.

## ■ Implicit Instruction

- After reading a story about animals, teacher asks students “what sound does cow begin with? Do you see any other animals whose names begin with that sound? What letter says /k/? Can you write the letter c?”

# Your Turn



- **Sketch out a plan on how you might introduce the /m/ sound and the letter m to a group of learners who have little or no experience with the sound or its spelling.**
- **Practice using the teach, practice, apply format with a partner.**

# Advanced Decoding



**Teach groups of letters commonly occurring in English**

- **Syllables**
- **Roots**
- **Prefixes**
- **Suffixes**



**Read this word:**

**pneumonoultracirosopicssilicovolcano**



**Read this word:**

**pneumonoultracirosopicssilicovolcano**

**Easier**

**Pneumono/ultra/micro/scopic/silico/volcano/con/osis**

**Pneumono**: related to the lung

**ultra**: beyond, exceeding

**micro**: very small

**scopic**: related to sight

**(ultramicroscopic**: exceedingly small to the sight)

**silico**: related to hard stone

**volcano**: related to volcanic dust

**con**: dust (from Greek: *Konis*)

**iosis**: disease

- **How are the strategies for decoding longer words different from those for decoding a single syllable word?**

# Word Study



- **Through active exploration, word study teaches students to examine words to discover the regularities, patterns and rules of English orthography needed to read and spell.**
- **Word Study increases specific knowledge of words — the spelling and meaning of individual words.**
- **Word Study increases reading, spelling, and vocabulary needed to become a fluent reader and writer.**

# Why is English Spelling a Challenge?



**I take it you already know  
Of tough and bough and cough and dough;  
Some may stumble but not you  
On hiccough, thorough, slough, and through  
Beware of heard a dreadful word  
That looks like beard and sounds like bird...**

# We Do Not Spell by Sound to Letter Correspondence



**If wee did spel fonetikly,  
Wurds miyt look liyk this,  
Mayd uv preediktabul  
Sownd-spelin korispondensez.**

# 5 Principles of English Orthography



1. **We spell with letters and letter combinations**
2. **We spell by the position of a sound in a word**
3. **We spell by letter patterns**
4. **We spell by meaning**
5. **Many English words come from other languages**

# 1. We spell with letters and letter combinations



- **Single letters:** trap, spend
- **Digraphs:** Chain, shrink, either, phone
- **Trigraphs:** wedege, botch
- **Silent letter combinations:** comb, autumn,  
folk, cake



# Sample Consonant Graphemes

- /m/: milk, bomb, autumn — b,mb, mn
- /t/: tent, putt, missed — t,tt,ed
- /d/: desk, dress summed — d,ed
- /n/: neck, know, gnaw — n, kn, gn
- /k/: cot, kettle, deck, — c,k,ck  
chorus, talk, unique, — ch, lk, que,
- /g/: get, ghost — g,gh



# Sample Graphemes Continued

**/f/: staff, asphalt, rough, half**

**/v/: very, give**

**/s/: suit, pass, scent, psycho**

**/z/: zen, fuzz, rise, his, xerox**

**/j/: judge, page**

**/l/: lice, pill, bubble**

**/r/: rat, wrist, under,dirt,surface**

**/h/: harm, whose**

**f,ff,ph,gh,lf**

**v,ve**

**s,ss,sc,ps**

**z,zz,se,s,x**

**j,dge,ge**

**l,ll,le**

**r,wr,er,ir,ur**

**h,wh**

## 2. We spell by the position of a sound in a word

- **Spellings for /f/:**
  - Fun, puff, rough
- **Spellings for /ng/:**
  - Ring, bang, hung = ng
  - Rink, ankle, anguish = n
- **Spellings for /a/:**
  - Rain, strait = ai
  - Ray, stray = ay



### 3. We spell by letter patterns

1. **Give, love, serve, halve** (Words don't end in v. They always end in ve.)
2. **Picnic, picnicking, traffic, trafficking** (An extra consonant must be inserted to keit.)
3. **Strange, gouge, forge, wage, badge** (The ending sound /j/ must be spelled with a ge or dge, never the letter j)



## 4. We Spell by Meaning

- |            |                        |
|------------|------------------------|
| ■ Define   | definitive, definition |
| ■ Complex  | complicated            |
| ■ Child    | children               |
| ■ Perspire | perspiration           |

## 5. Many Words Come from Other Languages



- **Coquette, antique, contour (French)**
- **Piano, Monticello (Italian)**
- **Chutzpah, schlock (Yiddish)**
- **Mesa, taco (Spanish)**
- **Polychrome, pneumocystic (Greek)**



# Facts About Predictability

- **50% of words are predictable by rule**
- **36% of words are predictable by rule with one error**
- **10% of words will be predictable with morphology and word origin taken into account**
- **Fewer than 4% are true oddities**



# Layers of English Orthography

## ■ Alphabet

- Single sound match-ups with letters (/m/ /a/ /t/)
- Alphabetic principle

## ■ Pattern

- Patterns that guide the grouping of letters
- Single syllable (CVCe — tape; CVVC — bead) and multi-syllable patterns (VCCV — batter; VCV — begin)

## ■ Meaning

- Groups of letters represent meaning directly (roots and affixes)
- Derivational spellings and meanings are constant (remove & rethink; composition & compose)





# Developmental Spelling Stages

## Emergent Stage

~~ rjo b (bed)

## Letter Name — Alphabetic Stage

bd bad wn wan whan

## Within Word Pattern Stage

teran traen trane driev chued

## Syllables & Affixes Stage

catel catle cattel damige attension

## Derivational Relations Stage

confodent oppisition

# Reading Stages and Stages of Word Knowledge



**Emergent Reader**

**Emergent**

**Beginning Reader**

**Letter Name-Alphabetic**

**Transitional Reader**

**Within Word Pattern**

**Intermediate Reader**

**Syllables & Affixes**

**Advanced Reader**

**Derivational Relations**

# What do you know about this student?



bed  
ship  
when  
lump  
float  
train  
place  
drive  
bright  
shoping (shopping)

spole (spoil)  
serveng (serving)  
chued (chewed)  
cairies (carries)  
marched  
shower  
catel (cattle)  
faver (favor)  
ripan (ripen)  
celer (cellar)



# How about this student?

bed  
ship  
when  
lump  
floaut (float)  
trane (train)  
place  
dreive (drive)  
brite (bright)  
shopeng (shopping)

spole (spoil)  
sering (serving)  
chued (chewed)  
carys (carries)  
marcht (marched)  
shawer (shower)  
cadel (cattle)  
faver (favor)  
ripun (ripen)  
seler (cellar)

# All sorts of sorts

- **Open** — student develops a rule
- **Closed** — student is given the rule
- **Blind** — oral sort, listen and classify
- **Speed** — How fast can you follow the rule?  
(develops automaticity)
- **Writing** — student records the words  
under the correct rule

# Example



## ■ Short “a”

- Cat
- Strand
- Track
- Ask
- Glad
- Quack
- Dance
- Mad

## ■ Long “a”

- Play
- Shake
- Cake
- Plane
- Shade
- Made
- Age

# What is a rule?



<b>Transfuse</b> <b>transfusion</b>	<b>Navigate</b> <b>navigation</b>	<b>Operate</b> <b>operation</b>	<b>Deride</b> <b>derision</b>
<b>Conclude</b> <b>conclusion</b>	<b>Televisе</b> <b>television</b>	<b>Migrate</b> <b>migration</b>	<b>Invade</b> <b>invasion</b>
<b>Collide</b> <b>collision</b>	<b>Abrade</b> <b>abrasion</b>	<b>Provide</b> <b>provision</b>	<b>Pretense</b> <b>pretension</b>
<b>Decorate</b> <b>decoration</b>	<b>Circulate</b> <b>circulation</b>	<b>Fuse</b> <b>fusion</b>	<b>Decide</b> <b>decision</b>

**se,te-drop e and add *ion***

**de-drop e and add *sion***





# What About English Learners?

- **While instruction in English is a critical component of a program for English learners, it must be accompanied by direct, explicit, systematic instruction in letter/sound relationships.**
- **Additional instruction in language structure before and after regular instruction is essential for English learners to access the core curriculum.**



# What About English Learners?

- **Teachers must be aware of the differences between English and a child's primary language in order to help teach English phonics and pronunciation.**
  - i.e. although many letters have similar sounds in English and Spanish, some do not. Students must sometimes unlearn the sound in the primary language when reading in English.

# In Summary...

## **Phonics is important**

- **Research has found the ability to apply knowledge of letter-sound correspondences to identify words is fundamental to independent word recognition.**
- **Good readers rely on the letters in the word, rather than context or pictures.**



## In Summary...

**Phonics is important to reading fluency.**

- **The automaticity with which a child decodes is fostered by the ease with which the child recognizes and connects sounds and letters.**
- **Students learn sounds and letters best when teachers use explicit, systematic instruction involving teacher modeling and extensive practice before independent application.**



## In Summary...

**Automatic Word Recognition is fostered by:**

- **student's ability to break up and read longer words accurately.**
- **instruction in spelling patterns, rules, exceptions, and Greek and Latin roots.**
- **Students learn sounds and letters best when teachers use explicit, systematic instruction involving teacher modeling and extensive practice before independent application.**

# In Summary...

## **English Learners Need:**

- **teachers to understand the basic differences between the first and second language.**
- **explicit, systematic instruction in phonology.**
- **preteaching and reteaching of language structures in order to reinforce the skills and strategies taught in phonology lessons.**